

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A needle guiding apparatus comprising:
a base defining an opening therethrough;
a guide platform disposed adjacent to the opening, the guide platform being rotatable about a rotation axis, the rotation axis extending through the opening and having a common point along the rotation axis;
a pivot disposed substantially completely above a top surface of the base at least partially within the guide platform and being rotatable about a pivot axis that is substantially perpendicular to the rotation axis; and
a guide shaft disposed at least partially within the pivot and extending along a longitudinal axis from a first end of the guide shaft to a second end of the guide shaft, the longitudinal axis intersecting with the rotation axis at the common point, the guide shaft being rotatable within a plane defined by the pivot axis, the rotation axis, and the common point, and comprising a radiopaque material between the first end and a locus along the guide shaft normal to the longitudinal axis at the common point, the radiopaque material extending to the locus, the locus located immediately adjacent to a material being less radiopaque than the radiopaque material.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the common point is located at the second end.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the pivot axis intersects the rotation axis at the common point.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the guide shaft comprises an inner wall of the pivot forming a bore.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the guide shaft is disposed at least partially within an inner wall in the pivot forming a bore.
6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the entire guide shaft between the first end and the locus comprises the radiopaque material.
7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the guide shaft is rotatable about the rotation axis and the pivot axis.
8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7 further comprising a guide rod that is connected to the pivot and that is rotatable about the rotation axis and the pivot axis to transfer rotational movement to the guide shaft.
9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8 further comprising a guide rod lock for preventing movement of the pivot.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a grid disposed about the rotation axis.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a shaft connected to the base, the shaft extending along a shaft axis perpendicular to the rotation axis.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11 further comprising an outer rim disposed about the base, the outer rim being rotatable around the shaft axis.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12 further comprising an outer rim lock for preventing relative movement between the outer rim and the base.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a radiopaque point disposed proximate the guide platform.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a radiopaque line segment disposed proximate the guide platform.

16. (Withdrawn) A method of guiding a needle to a target, the method comprising the steps of: positioning a fluoro axis in a first fluoro position intersecting a target, the fluoro axis defined by an energy emitter at a first point and an energy receiver at a second point;

selecting a starting point on a needle guiding apparatus comprising:

a guide platform being rotatable about a rotation axis, the rotation axis having a common point along the rotation axis,

a pivot disposed at least partially within the guide platform and being rotatable about a pivot axis that is substantially perpendicular to the rotation axis,

a guide shaft disposed at least partially within the pivot and extending along a longitudinal axis from a first end of the guide shaft to a second end of the guide shaft, the longitudinal axis intersecting with the rotation axis at the common point, the guide shaft comprising a radiopaque material between the first end and a locus along the guide shaft normal to the longitudinal axis at the common point, the radiopaque material extending to the locus, the locus located immediately adjacent to a material being less radiopaque than the radiopaque material, the starting point disposed adjacent to the rotation axis, and

an aiming line radiating perpendicularly from the rotation axis;

positioning the starting point in a first imaging position, wherein the fluoro axis intersects the starting point;

positioning the fluoro axis in a second fluoro position intersecting the common point and the target;

positioning the guide platform such that the aiming line substantially aligns with the starting point; and

positioning the guide shaft such that the longitudinal axis is parallel with the fluoro axis in the second fluoro position.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 further comprising inserting a needle through the guide shaft along the longitudinal axis.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 further comprising viewing a device for displaying a visual representation of radiopaque material between the energy emitter and the energy receiver.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of positioning the guide platform such that the aiming line substantially aligns with the starting point occurs prior to the step of positioning the second fluoro position.